MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY			
MEETING OF THE:	**AUTHORITY**		
DATE:	**14 JUNE 2016**	**REPORT NO:**	**CFO/054/16**
PRESENTING OFFICER	**MONITORING OFFICER**		
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	**JANET HENSHAW**	**REPORT AUTHOR:**	**KELLY KELLAWAY – DEMOCRATIC SERVICES MANAGER, EXT 4113**
OFFICERS CONSULTED:	**STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT GROUP**		
TITLE OF REPORT:	**STRUCTURE OF THE AUTHORITY 2016/17**		

APPENDICES:	**APPENDIX A:**	**DRAFT COMMITTEE STRUCTURE 2016/17**
	APPENDIX B:	**COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP TEMPLATE**

Purpose of Report

1. To

(a) Inform Members of:-

(i) the minimum legal structure of the Authority
(ii) the existing decision making structure of the Authority; and
(iii) optional variations to the existing structure

(b) request that the Authority determines an appropriate decision making structure for 2016/17; and

(c) request that arrangements are made for the appointment of Committees, the nomination of Chairs, the determination of the powers and duties of Committees, the appointment of Members to Committees; and Lead Member and Ambassador Roles.

Recommendation

2. That Members determine an appropriate decision making structure for 2016/17 by:-

(a) Determining which Committees it wishes to establish.

(b) Determining the number of Voting Members to be appointed to each Committee.

(c) Determining the number of seats on each Committee to be allocated to each political group in accordance with the political balance regulations.

(d) Determining that alternates from the relevant political group, can attend a Committee in the absence of the substantive Member.

(e) Confirming the Members who are to be appointed to Committees; and Lead Member and Ambassador Roles, in accordance with the wishes of the relevant political group in respect of those seats allocated to that group.

(f) Confirming that Members will inform Democratic Services prior to the start of any meeting, of an alternate Member, if they are unable to attend.

(g) Confirming whether it wishes to continue with the existing structure and/ or whether it wishes to amend the structure.

Introduction and Background

3. This report confirms the political balance of the Authority as 16 Labour, 1 Liberal Democrat and 1 Conservative Member.

4. Based upon the balance of the Authority, Members are requested to consider and determine the appropriate decision making structure, appointment of Committees, nominate Chairs and Members to those Committees; and nominate Members to the Lead Member and Member Ambassador Roles.

5. Minimum Legal Requirement

5.1 The minimum statutory requirements for a decision making structure are:-

(a) Authority Meetings – There is a statutory requirement to hold an Annual Meeting (before the end of June in each year) and to meet to determine the precept each year (by the end of February in each year). The Authority is also required to consider other miscellaneous matters including statutory reports of the Chief Finance Officer or Monitoring Officer and public interest reports, should they arise.

(b) It is recognised as good practice to have an Audit Committee, or a Committee that deals with audit matters.

6. Existing Structure

6.1 At present, the Authority has appointed:-

(a) A Community Safety and Protection Committee and a Policy and Resources Committee, each consisting of 8 Members; and a Performance and Scrutiny Committee, consisting of 7 voting Members (according to Political proportionality), open to all Members (with the exception of the Chair and

Vice-Chairs' of the Authority), along with an Independent Person who does not have voting rights.

The Community Safety and Protection Committee and the Policy and Resources Committee have delegated decision making powers in the circumstances where there is no opportunity for the Authority to meet in full.

(b) An Appeals Committee and an Appointments Committee.

(c) An Audit Sub-Committee consisting of 5 Members, which also deals with Members Standards issues. This Sub-Committee currently also has responsibility for the Statutory Officers Disciplinary Procedure.

(d) In July 2015, the Authority approved the establishment of a Joint Fire and Police Collaboration Committee, a none decision making Committee consisting of 5 Members – 3 Members representing Merseyside Fire & Rescue Authority (Chair and two Vice-Chair's), plus 2 Co-Opted Member representing Merseyside Police (Police & Crime Commissioner and Deputy Police & Crime Commissioner).

Each Committee has certain delegated powers which are contained within its Terms of Reference.

6.2 The Authority has also:

(a) Appointed Lead Members and Member Ambassadors, with additional responsibility for certain services; and

(b) Appointed a Member Development Group with approved Terms of Reference, consisting of Officers from Democratic Services and People & Organisational Development; and Members from each political group.

7. Determination of a Structure For 2016/17

7.1 A draft structure is attached to this report as Appendix A. This incorporates Lead Member and Member Ambassador roles and proposes that:

(a) The Performance & Scrutiny Committee is removed from the Authority structure. However, the Authority recognises that effective scrutiny remains important for the Authority. As such, it is proposed that the remit of the Audit Sub-Committee be extended to encompass scrutiny; with this Committee being renamed the Audit and Scrutiny Sub-Committee.

(b) The Authority Committee Structure continues to include a Policy and Resources Community; a Community Safety and Protection Committee; an Audit and Scrutiny Sub-Committee, plus an Appeals Committee and Appointments Committee.

(c) The Member Development Group continues to form part of the Committee Structure, however in addition to Member training and development, this group will also lead on employee engagement activities. As such, the name of this Group will be amended to the Member Development and Engagement Group.

(d) The Authority continues with its six Lead Member and two Member Ambassador positions. Each of these appointed Members will have an allocated Support Officer; and will be appointed to the Committee most relevant to the remit of their role.

7.2 The proposed Terms of Reference and powers of each Committee and Sub-Committee are contained within the Constitution for 2016/17, which is the subject of another report on this agenda.

7.3 In making their decision on a structure, Members are also requested to take into account the following matters:

(a) The requirement for each political group to complete a notice in writing to the Monitoring Officer, detailing their Membership and a Group leader where appropriate.

(b) The requirement for political balance on any Committees which are appointed; unless the Authority has resolved otherwise and no Member has voted against such resolution.

(c) The requirement to appoint Members to Committees in accordance with the wishes of the political group to whom the seat has been allocated. In this respect it will assist the Clerk if all such nominations can be determined on, or before the Annual Meeting.

(d) The appointment of Chairs of Committees.

(e) The appointment of Lead Members.

(f) The appointment of Member Ambassadors.

(g) The requirement for approval of the Powers and Duties of each appointed Committee.

8. <u>Number of Seats & Political Balance/ Membership of Committees</u>

8.1 The Authority is required to make appointments to its Committees in a manner which, so far as practicable reflects the political balance of the Authority unless the Authority has resolved otherwise and no Member has voted against such resolution.

8.2 There have been local elections this year for the District Councils. As a result, the representation of each political group on the Authority will be as follows:

Labour	16 Members
Liberal Democrat	1 Member
Conservative	1 Member

8.3 In order to comply with political balance requirements, where practicable, it is therefore appropriate that the proportion of seats on Committees allocated to political groups, is as follows:

Labour	88.88%
Liberal Democrat	5.56%
Conservative	5.56%

8.4 Having decided which Committees the Authority is to establish; and the number of Voting Members to be appointed to each Committee, it is then appropriate for each political group to submit nominations for membership of those Committees in accordance with the allocation of seats to that political group.

8.5 Members are requested to consider their nominations in advance of the meeting, so that the information can be provided at the Annual Meeting, to enable the Authority to confirm the appointments at the Annual Meeting.

8.6 A template for Members to complete is attached as Appendix B to this report.

9. Chairs and Vice Chairs of Committees

9.1 Having determined which Members are to be appointed to the Committees, it is appropriate for the Authority to consider proposals for the appointment of Chairs to Committees.

9.2 Members are requested to consider this issue prior to the Annual Meeting, with a view to the Authority being in a position to appoint Chairs of Committees at the Annual Meeting.

10. Dates of Meetings

There is a separate report on this agenda dealing with a draft schedule of dates of meetings. This has been prepared on the basis of the draft Committee structure being approved, although alternative meeting dates will be provided if necessary.

Equality and Diversity Implications

11. There are no equality and/ or diversity implications directly related to this report.

Staff Implications

12. There are no direct staff implications contained within this report.

Legal Implications

13. The Authority is required by law to set a minimum structure and this report addresses that requirement.

Financial Implications & Value for Money

14. Costs associated with Members Allowances are detailed in another report on this agenda.

Risk Management, Health & Safety, and Environmental Implications

15. There are no direct risk management or health and safety implications contained within this report.

Contribution to Our Mission: *Safer Stronger Communities – Safe Effective Firefighters*

16. Communities are stronger in the knowledge that the Authority has its structure in place.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

GLOSSARY OF TERMS